

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 000016

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ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY AF/C:JSBLODGETT:LAR

APPROVED BY AF:EWMULCAHY

AF/C:TBUCHANAN (DRAFT)

EUR/WE:WHMARSH(DRAFT)

PM/SAS:WINSHIP (DRAFT)

DOD/ISA:BWMOORE (DRAFT)

S/S - MR. KUCHEL

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O P 010033Z JAN 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 000016

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, GB

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT BONGO'S REQUEST FOR ARMS

REF: (A) STATE 304661 (NOTAL); (B) PARIS 33955 (NOTAL);
ABIDJAN FOR SCHAUFLE

1. IN ORDER TO SOOTHE INEVITABLE FRENCH SENSITIVITIES
REGARDING BONGO REQUEST, DEPARTMENT USED OPPORTUNITY OF
MEETING WITH FRENCH EM00FF ON DECEMBER 30 TO PROVIDE
GENERAL OUTLINE OF ACTIVITY TO DATE. PRESENTATION WAS
ALONG FOLLOWING LINES:

(A) WE HAVE BEEN APPROACHED BY BONGO WITH REQUEST FOR
ARMS SUPPLY;

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(B) WE ARE TRYING TO REACT IN POSITIVE SPIRIT, PRIMARILY

AS MEANS OF REASSURING GAOON AND OTHER CONCERNED COUNTRIES
OF CONTINUED USG SUPPORT VS. SOVIET AGGRESSION IN ANGOLA;

(C) WE ARE ASSEMBLING TEAM OF MILITARY EXPERTS WHO WILL
BE SENT TO LIBREVILLE IN NEXT FEW DAYS TO CONSULT WITH GOG,
OBTAIN GOG ASSESSMENT OF ITS NEEDS, AND SUBMIT RECOMMENDA-
TIONS REGARDING POSSIBLE U.S. ROLE IN FULFILLING THOSE

NEEDS;

(D) WHATEVER THAT ROLE MAY BE, WE EXPECT IT WILL BE A
MODEST ONE. PURPOSE MORE PSYCHOLOGICAL THAN SUBSTANTIVE.
WE HAVE NO INTENTION OF SUPPLANTING FRANCE AS GABON'S
PRINCIPAL ARMS SUPPLIER;

(E) WE WILL CONTINUE TO KEEP GOF INFORMED.

2. DEPARTMENT BELIEVES SIMILAR APPROACH TO APPROPRIATE

FRENCH AUTHORITIES IN LIBREVILLE WOULD BE DESIRA0LE. IF
AMBASSADOR SCHAUFLELE HAS NOT ALREADY MADE SUCH AN APPROACH,
AMBASSADOR STEIGMAN IS REQUESTED TO DO SO PRIOR TO DOD
TEAM ARRIVAL (EXPECTED JANUARY 5).

3. TALKING POINTS ALSO BEING PREPARED ON THIS SUBJECT
FOR AMBASSADOR SCHAUFLELE'S MEETINGS WITH JOURNIAC IN
PARIS. ROBINSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, ARMS, SUPPLIES, SALES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE000016
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JSBLODGETT:LAR
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750452-0157
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760191/aaaaddr.tel
Line Count: 88
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 75 STATE 304661
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16 APR 2004 by SmithRJ>; APPROVED <16 AUG 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RESIDENT BONGO'S REQUEST FOR ARMS
TAGS: MASS, GB, FR, (BONGO, ALBERT BERNARD)
To: LIBREVILLE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006